ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 08-09-2011 BY 60324 UCBAW/SAB/SBS

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Tolson
DeLoach
Mohr
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

TO : Mr. DeLoach

DATE: 12/21/65

FROM : M. A. Jones

SUBJECT: DONALD W. POTEAT, PRESIDENT
GREATER CHARLESTON CITIZENS' COUNCIL
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

COLUMBIA

BACKGROUND: "The Charleston Evening Post" of 12/10/65 contains an advertisement (clipping attached) captioned, "The FBI Can Err." This advertisement in the nature of a "public service" points out that citizens are under no legal obligation to respond to questions by the FBI in connection with investigations involving possible violations under civil rights legislation. Citizens, if interviewed, can advise the investigator that they do not want to answer any questions and can legally refuse to do so. However, in expressing this opinion for the Greater Charleston Citizens' Council, Poteat points out that it does not imply that information in any "real criminal investigation should be withheld from any investigating officer." He also states that the FBI is a very efficient and honorable law enforcement organization and the Citizens' Council urges all citizens to cooperate with it fully in matters involving crime and subversion.

INFORMATION IN BUREAU FILES: Bureau files reveal numerous "see" references to Poteat in regard to his radical activities and support of segregation in the South; however, he has never been the subject of an investigation.

DONALD W. POTEAT
NIC
REC
N. 105-34237-66-1

Donald Wade Poteat was born on [redacted] and was employe by the Southern Bell Telephone Company at Charleston, South Carolina, as a lineman on June 12, 1950. Poteat took a leave of absence and served in the United States Army from October 28, 1951, to October 12, 1953. He returned to work for the telephone company on the latter date and left on September 11, 1957, to attend college. He apparently was a satisfactory employee at the telephone company. He attended Clemson College in Clemson, South Carolina, and reportedly graduated in January, 1961. He was subsequently employed as a science teacher at the North Charleston High School at North Charleston, South Carolina, from January 7, 1962, to June 1, 1962, at which time he resigned from that position. The high school principal stated that while Poteat was all right in other respects he was of the "extremist type" on such issues as segregation. Poteat apparently presently derives his income from his employment by Citizens' Councils and works over the entire state of South Carolina with these Councils as an organizer.

57 JAN 6 1966

Enclosure

ENCLOSURE

Continued

ME RESEARCH

1 - Mr. DeLoach 1 - Mr. Wick

JMM:mjl (6)

M. A. Jones to DeLoach Memo
RE: DONALD W. POTEAT

In September, 1962, Poteat spoke at a meeting of the Columbia, South Carolina, Citizens' Council at which time he labeled as "internal treason" the lunch counter integration moves by certain downtown business firms in Columbia.

In December, 1962, Poteat was active in attempting to generate student opposition to the admission of a Negro into Clemson College. Poteat was active in circulating a pamphlet among the students which in part stated that integration is communism in action.

"The Winston-Salem Journal" of August 28, 1964, characterized Poteat as a "fiery young racist" who preached white supremacy at a meeting of the Forsyth County (white) Citizens' Council. It was reported that this was the first meeting of that Council and it appeared that most of the 90 persons attending filled out membership cards at the conclusion of Poteat's address.

In June, 1963, Poteat was identified as an organizer for the Citizens' Councils of America and was active in organizing several Councils in Greensboro, Burlington, and Durham, North Carolina.

In September, 1964, Poteat was active in organizing a Citizens' Council in Wilmington, North Carolina, and was assisted by several individuals who were active in the Wilmington, North Carolina, Klavern of the United Klaverns of America. Poteat was identified as Field Secretary for North Carolina and South Carolina of the Citizens' Council of America, Jackson, Mississippi.

Editorial ticklers reveal we have enjoyed cordial relations with "The Charleston Evening Post."

RECOMMENDATION: For information.

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FD-350 (Rev. 7-16-63)

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Mr. Mohr

Mr. Tolson
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Mr. Walsh
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

THE FBI CAN ERR!

In view of the public interest in possible investigation under Civil Rights legislation of various local affairs by the Attorney General of the United States, the Greater Charleston Citizens' Council feels that as a public service it should inform local citizens of their individual rights if they should be approached or questioned by FBI or other agents in connection with such investigation.

A citizen is under no legal obligation at any time to answer any questions asked by any investigator about anything except in a court hearing or at a court-connected proceeding.

For example, if an FBI agent or other investigator contacts a citizen at home, at work, on the street, or elsewhere, such citizen can, if he wishes, advise the investigator that he does not wish to answer any questions and can legally refuse to do so.

In expressing this opinion, the Greater Charleston Citizens' Council does not imply that information in any real criminal investigation should be withheld from any investigating officer. The FBI is a very efficient and honorable law enforcement organization, and the Greater Charleston Citizens' Council urges that all citizens cooperate with it fully in its endeavors against crime and subversion.

On the other hand, we do point out that when the FBI is ordered to make an investigation, not of criminals or subversives, but of honorable law abiding citizens, these citizens can legally stand silent and refuse to answer any questions of any kind, harmless as such questions may appear about voting, schools, employment, or anything whatsoever.

For Further Information Write to:

GREATER CHARLESTON CITIZENS' COUNCIL
401 Peoples Building, Charleston, S. C.
Donald W. Poteat, Pres.

LISTEN TO CITIZENS' COUNCIL FORUM AT 6:45 P.M., EVERY SUNDAY ON RADIO STATION WCSC 1390 ON YOUR DIAL.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page #2A
The Charleston
Evening Post
Charleston, S.C.

James DeLoach 12/2/65

Date: December 10, 1965
Edition: Evening
Author: Unknown
Editor: Robert M. Hitt
Title:

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office:

☐ Being Investigated

ENCLOSURE

105-34237-66-1